



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY TRAITS AND  
OCCUPATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY WITH CAREER  
INTERESTS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

**ABDULLAH SEIF ABDULLAH**

**FPP 2001 6**

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UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

**By**

**ABDULLAH SEIF ABDULLAH**

**Thesis Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy in the Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia**

**November 2001**



## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my late mother Amina Mohamed Al Bahsan, father Seif Abdullah Al Miskry, and sister Maryam Seif Al Miskry who always inspired me to study and spent as much as they could for my comfort and success. May God bless them.

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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**November 2001**

**Chairman: Professor Othman Dato' Haji Mohamed, Ph.D.**

**Faculty: Educational Studies.**

This study investigated the relationship between personality traits and occupational self-efficacy with career interests among Malaysian university students. The demographic factors associated with students' occupational self-efficacy and career interests were also determined. The study had provided more insights on students' behaviour that could enhance the alleviation of social and academic maladjustment among students and increase their academic achievement. In addition, the findings of this study were likely to enhance job satisfaction, quality services, and productivity. The research questions and hypotheses determined the following objectives of the study:

1. The identification of students' occupational self-efficacy expectations, career interests patterns, prevalent personality traits and their relationship.
2. The relationship between personality traits, occupational self-efficacy, and career interests with the extraneous variables.

3. The relationship between personality traits and occupational self-efficacy with career interests after controlling for the demographic variables.

The population of the study comprised the second and third year Malaysian undergraduate students. Accordingly, based on the knowledge disciplines, 238 subjects were selected from UPM, IIUM, and UTM using the cluster random sampling. The Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale (OSES), Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI), and Personality Research Form (PRF) were used in the data collection to measure occupational self-efficacy, career interests, and personality traits respectively. The computer program software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in the data analysis. The statistical techniques used were Pearson and Point-Biserial correlation, ANOVA, MANOVA, and the Multiple Regression.

The results indicated that students in general had moderate levels of occupational self-efficacy whereby male students were more confident in nontraditional occupation and sceptical in traditional occupations. In addition, the findings indicated that the largest group of students preferred social and investigative careers and very few were interested in realistic, artistic, and conventional careers. The most prevalent career patterns among participants were represented by the following Holland codes ISE, IER, EIS, SEI, SIE, and SIR. Moreover, the findings suggested that Engineering students were highly associated with achievement and understanding traits whereby Law students had high degree of dominance and aggression traits. The Economic and management students were associated with nurturance, order and cognitive structure traits. In contrast, Medical students were highly associated with achievement, change, and cognitive

structure. Moreover, affiliation and social recognition traits were dominant among Education students whereas the aggressive personality trait was prevalent among Agriculture students. Furthermore, students' personality traits that were significantly related with their career interests were achievement (I), affiliation (R, I, S), change (R, A), nurturance (S, E), order (S, C), social recognition (R, I) and understanding (I). These findings were consistent with the previous studies by Holland (1985) and Lidholm and Touliatos (1995).

Significant relationship was also found between occupational self-efficacy and career interests. These findings were supported by the previous studies by Lent, et. al. (1986) and Bores-Rangel, et. al. (1990). When the personality traits were examined, only cognitive structure and dominance personality traits were significantly related to occupational self-efficacy. Nonsignificant difference was found between occupational self-efficacy expectations and student's faculty, major field of study, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. Also, nonsignificant relationship was found between occupational self-efficacy and age, gender, and home location. Yet, the findings suggested a significant relationship between occupational self-efficacy and students' year of study and significant difference between occupational self-efficacy of different groups of occupational consideration. A significant difference was found between career interests of students from different faculties, major field of studies, and occupational preferences. In addition, a significant relationship between career interests with gender and home location was found. Finally, the stepwise multiple regression revealed that the personality traits, occupational self-efficacy and some demographic variables have significant linear relationship with career interests.

Abstrak tesis ini adalah untuk Lembaga Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia bagi memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah dalam Doktor Falsafa.

**PERHUBUNGAN ANTARA TRAIT PERSONALITI DAN  
KECEKAPAN SWADIRI DALAM PEKERJAAN DENGAN MINAT KERJAYA  
DI KALANGAN PELAJAR UNIVERSITI**

Ole:

**ABDULLAH SEIF ABDULLAH**

**November 2001**

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Penyelidikan ini mengkaji perhubungan di antara trait personaliti, kecekapan swadiri dengan minat kerjaya. Faktor demografi yang berkaitan dengan kecekapan swadiri dalam pekerjaan dan minat kerja juga telah dikenal pasti. Kajian ini telah dapat mengemukakan wawasan ke atas perlakuan pelajar dalam mengurangkan ketidaksesuaian akademik serta sosial di kalangan pelajar di samping meningkat prestasi akademik mereka. Sehubungan ini, dapatan kajian kemungkinan akan dapat meningkatkan kepuasan dalam pekerjaan, kualiti perkhidmatan dan produktiviti. Persoalan kajian dan hipotesis kajian ini ditetapkan berasaskan objektif kajian seperti berikut:

1. Perhubungan antara jangkaan kecekapan swadiri pelajar dalam pekerjaan, pola minat kerjaya dan trait personaliti mereka.
2. Perhubungan antara trait personaliti, kecekapan swadiri dan minat kerjaya dengan pemboleh ubah extraneous.
3. Perhubungan antara trait personaliti, kecekapan swadiri dan minat kerja

setelah mengawal pemboleh ubah demografi.

Populasi kajian adalah dari kalangan pelajar universiti tahun dua dan tiga. Seramai 238 subjek telah dipilih secara rawak berkelompok berasaskan disiplin pengetahuan mereka dari UPM, IIUM dan UTM. Alat kajian The Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale (OSES), Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI), dan Personality Research Form (PRF) telah digunakan bagi pengumpulan data untuk mengukur kecekapan swadiri dalam pekerjaan, minat kerjaya dan trait personaliti. Perisian program komputer, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) telah diguna dalam menganalisis data. Teknik statistik yang diguna adalah korelasi Pearson dan Point Biserial, ANOVA, MANOVA dan Regresi Pelbagai.

Hasil kajian menunjukkan secara amnya pelajar mempunyai tahap kecekapan swadiri dalam pekerjaan yang sederhana di mana pelajar lelaki lebih yakin dalam pekerjaan bukan tradisional dan bersikap curiga terhadap pekerjaan tradisional. Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa kumpulan terbesar di kalangan pelajar memilih kerjaya investigative dan bilangan yang kecil menunjukkan minat dalam kerjaya realistik, artistik dan konvensional. Pola kerjaya yang paling kerap di kalangan peserta diwakili dengan kod Holland ISE, IER, EIS, SEI, SIE dan SIR. Sehubungan ini, dapatan menunjukkan bahawa pelajar Kejuruteraan mempunyai perkaitan yang tinggi dengan trait pencapaian dan pemahaman, manakala pelajar jurusan Undang-undang mempunyai trait agresif dan darjah dominan yang tinggi. Pelajar jurusan Ekonomi dan pengurusan dikaitkan dengan trait pengasuhan, teratur dan berstruktur kognitif. Berlainan pula dengan pelajar Perubatan yang dikaitkan dengan trait pencapaian, perubahan dan



kognitif yang tinggi. Di samping itu trait penyatuan dan pengiktirafan sosial adalah dominan di kalangan pelajar jurusan Pendidikan manakala pelajar jurusan Pertanian dikenal pasti dengan trait yang paling agresif. Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa trait personaliti pelajar yang mempunyai kaitan signifikan dengan minat kerjaya dan pencapaian adalah pencapaian (I), penyatuan (R, I, S), perubahan (R, A), pengasuhan (S, E), teratur (S, C), pengiktirafan sosial (R, I) dan kefahaman (I). Dapatan ini adalah kekal dengan kajian lepas yang dijalankan oleh Holland (1985) dan Lidholm dan Touliatos (1995).

Perhubungan yang signifikan juga telah dikenal pasti di antara kecekapan swadiri dalam pekerjaan dan minat kerjaya. Dapatan ini disokong oleh kajian lepas oleh Lent, et. al. (1986) dan Bores-Rangel et. al. (1990). Apabila trait personaliti dikaji, hanya trait personaliti pengstruktur kognitif dan dominan mempunyai perkaitan yang signifikan dengan kecekapan swadiri dalam pekerjaan. Dapatan perhubungan tidak signifikan diperolehi antara jangkaan kecekapan swadiri dalam pekerjaan dengan jurusan pengajian pelajar, bidang pengkhususan pelajar, etnik dan status sosio-ekonomi. Sehubungan ini juga dapatan perhubungan yang tidak signifikan diperolehi antara kecekapan swadiri dalam pekerjaan dengan umur, genus dan lokasi kediaman. Namun, kajian menunjukkan wujud perhubungan yang signifikan antara kecekapan swadiri dalam pekerjaan dengan tahun pengajian pelajar dan juga perhubungan yang signifikan antara kecekapan swadiri dalam pekerjaan dari perbezaan kumpulan pekerjaan. Perbezaan signifikan diperolehni diantara minat kerjaya pelajar dari fakulti yang berbeza, bidang pengajian major dan pilihan pekerjaan. Di samping itu, terdapat

perhubungan yang signifikan diantara minat kerjaya dengan genus dan lokasi tempat kediaman. Pada akhirnya, regresi pelbagai secara stepwise menunjukkan bahawa trait personaliti, kecekapan swadiri dalam pekerjaan dan beberapa pemboleh ubah demografi mempunyai perhubungan linear yang signifikan dengan minat kerjaya.

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In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to the panel of languages and measurements experts for their valuable comments and suggestions (see Appendix C). I am also indebted to the Deans of the faculties where data were collected in IIUM, UTM, and UPM for their permission to allow the data collection from their students. I also acknowledge with profound gratitude the financial support provided by the El Farouq Foundation for without it this work could hardly be materialised.

Likewise, I would like to express my gratitude to the Ministry of Education, Zanzibar for granting me a permission to pursue the higher studies. I am equally grateful to my wife and children for their support, endurance and perseverance through all the tough times they experienced while I was preparing this work. Finally, I would like to acknowledge all types of support rendered to me financially, technically, and morally from other parties not mentioned herein that helped to make this project a success.

I certify that an Examination Committee met on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2001 to conduct the final examination of Abdullah Seif Abdullah on his Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled "The Relationship between Personality Traits and Occupational Self-Efficacy with Career Interests among University Students" in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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Date: 18 JAN 2002

This thesis submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

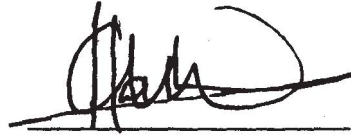
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Professor,  
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**Date:**

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations that have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.



**Abdullah Seif Abdullah**

Date: 18/1/2002

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	x
APPROVAL SHEETS	xi
DECLARATION FORM	xiii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xiv
LIST OF TABLES	xvii
LIST OF FIGURES	xxi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxii

### CHAPTER

<b>I</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	1
	Background of the Study	1
	Theories of Vocational Behaviour	7
	Statement of the Problem	9
	The Conceptual Framework	12
	Objectives of the Study	14
	Research Questions	15
	Hypotheses	16
	Operational Definitions of the Terms	20
	Significance of the Study	22
<b>II</b>	<b>REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE</b>	24
	Introduction	24
	Holland's Theory	24
	Key Concepts	30
	Roe's Theory of Career Choice	35
	Super's Theory of Career Development	40
	Social Cognitive Theory	42
	Self-Efficacy Antecedents	46
	Self-Concept and Self-Efficacy	48
	Summary	49
	Personality Traits	51
	Personality Traits and Vocational Interests	53
	Congruence between Vocation and Interest	60
	Personality and Environment	62
	Gender and Vocational Interests	64
	Ethnicity, Culture and Vocational Interests	69
	Environment and Vocational Interests	72
	Career Self-Efficacy Expectations	73



<b>III</b>	<b>RESEARCH METHOD</b>	<b>96</b>
	Introduction	96
	Research Design	97
	Sampling	99
	Sample Size	101
	Instrumentation	106
	Research Questionnaire	107
	Section A: Demographic Data	107
	Section B: Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale	107
	Reliability and Validity	108
	Administration and Scoring	110
	Section C: Vocational Preferences Inventory	111
	Reliability and Validity	113
	Scoring the VPI	114
	Section D: Personality Research Form	115
	PRF Administration	120
	Scoring PRF	121
	PRF Reliability and Validity	122
	Data Collection	123
	Data Analysis	123
<b>IV</b>	<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>130</b>
	Introduction	130
	Descriptive Analysis	132
	Occupational Self-Efficacy Level	140
	Occupational Self-Efficacy Strength	158
	Career Interests Patterns	180
	Prevalent Personality Traits among University Students	195
	Inferential Analysis	212
	The Relationship between Personality Traits and Career Interests	212
	Relationship between Achievement Trait and Career Interests	214
	Relationship between Affiliation Trait and Career Interests	216
	Relationship between Aggressive Trait and Career Interests	218
	Relationship between Change Trait and Career Interests	218
	Relationship between Cognitive Structure Trait and Career Interests	221
	Relationship between Dominance Trait and Career Interests	221
	Relationship between Endurance Trait and Career Interests	222
	Relationship between Nurturance Trait and Career Interests	223
	Relationship between Order Trait and Career Interests	225
	Relationship between Social Recognition Trait and Career Interests	227
	Relationship between Understanding Trait and Career Interests	229
	Relationship between Occupational Self-Efficacy and Career Interests	231



Relationship between Students' Personality Trait and Their Occupational Self-Efficacy	232
Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Differences According to Their Demographic Variables	237
The Occupational Self-Efficacy Differences among Students of Various Major Fields of Study	239
The Relationship Between Age and Occupational Self-Efficacy	241
The Occupational Self-Efficacy Differences Across Students' Ethnicity	241
The Occupational Self-Efficacy Differences Among Students' Socio-economic Groups	243
The Relationship between students' Home Location and Their Occupational Self-Efficacy	244
The Relationship between students' Year of Study and Their Occupational Self-Efficacy	244
The Occupational Self-Efficacy Differences Among Students' Occupational Preference Groups	245
The Personality Traits Differences Across Students' Demographic Variables	247
Students' Career Interests Across Their Demographic Variables	258
The Relationship Between Personality Traits and Occupational Self-Efficacy with Career Interests After Controlling For Demographic Variables	276
The Multiple Regression Equation	298
<b>V DISCUSSION, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>315</b>
Summary	366
Recommendation	379
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>383</b>
<b>Appendix A1: Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale</b>	<b>393</b>
<b>Appendix A2: Vocational Preference Inventory</b>	<b>398</b>
<b>Appendix A3: Personality Research Form</b>	<b>403</b>
<b>Appendix B: Exploration Data Analysis (EDA)</b>	<b>416</b>
<b>Appendix C: Panel of Measurements and Language Experts</b>	<b>436</b>
<b>Appendix D: Application and Permission Letters</b>	<b>437</b>
<b>Appendix E: Author Bio-Data</b>	<b>458</b>



## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
1	Variables and Statistical Techniques For each Hypothesis	128
2	Students' Distribution According to Their Faculties and Gender	133
3	The Distribution of Students' ethnicity Across Gender	134
4	Students' Ethnicity across Major Fields of Study	135
5	Distribution of Students' Major Fields of study across Gender	137
6	Distribution of Students' Ethnicity across Considered Occupation	139
7	Traditional and Nontraditional Occupations	140
8	Means and Standard Deviations of Students' Self-Efficacy Levels Across Faculties	145
9	The Distribution of Occupational Self-Efficacy Levels Across Gender	146
10	The Distribution of Occupational Self-Efficacy Levels Across Year of Study	147
11	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Levels Across Ethnicity	149
12	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Levels Across Home Location	150
13	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Levels Across Socio-Economic Status	151
14	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Levels Across Major Fields of Study	153
15	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Levels Across Their Considered Occupations	156
16	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Strength Across Their Faculties	161
17	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Strength Across Gender	163
18	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Strength Across Their Years of Study	165
19	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Strength Across Ethnicity	167
20	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Strength Across Home Location	168
21	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Strength Across Socio-economic Status	170
22	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Strength Across Their Major Fields of Study	172
23	The Distribution of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy Strength Across Their Considered Occupations	177
24	Holland's Codes Across Students' Faculties	181
25	Students Career Interests Patterns Across Faculties	183
26	The Distribution of Students' Career Interests Patterns Across Gender	184
27	The Distribution of Student's Career Interests Patterns Across Ethnicity	186



28	Students Career Interests Patterns Across Home Location	187
29	The Distribution of Students' Career Interests Across Their Major Fields of Study	190
30	The Distribution of Students' Career Interests Across Their Considered Occupations	194
31	The Distribution of Personality Traits Across Faculty	198
32	The Distribution of Personality Traits Across Gender	199
33	The Distribution of Personality Traits Across Ethnicity	201
34	The Distribution of Personality Traits Across Students' Home Location	202
35	The Distribution of Personality Traits Across Students' Socio-economic Status	204
36	The Distribution of Personality Traits Across Major Fields of Studies	206
37	The Distribution of Personality Traits Across Considered Occupations	210
38	Correlation Matrices of the Relationship between Personality Traits, Occupational Self-efficacy and Career Interests	213
39	Relationship between Achievement Trait and Career Interests	216
40	Relationship between Affiliation Traits and Career Interests	218
41	Relationship between Aggression Trait and Career Interests	218
42	Relationship between Change Trait and Career Interests	221
43	Relationship between Cognitive Structure Trait and Career Interests	221
44	Relationship between Dominance Trait and Career Interests	222
45	Relationship between Endurance Trait and Career Interests	223
46	Relationship between Nurturance Trait and Career Interests	225
47	Relationship between Order Trait and Career Interests	227
48	Relationship between Social Recognition Trait and Career Interests	229
49	Relationship between Understanding Trait and Career Interests	230
50	Relationship between Occupational Self-Efficacy and Career Interests	231
51	Relationship between Personality Traits and Occupational Self-Efficacy	236
52	Means and Standard Deviations of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy by Faculty	238
53	The Analysis of variance of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy by Faculty	238
54	Means and Standard Deviations of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy by major Fields of Study	240
55	The Analysis of variance of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy by major Field of Study	240
56	The Relationship between Age and Gender and Occupational Self-efficacy	241
57	Means and Standard Deviations of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy by Ethnicity	242
58	The Analysis of variance of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy by Ethnicity	242
59	Means and Standard Deviations of Students' Occupational Self-Efficacy by Socio-economic Status	243



60	The Analysis of variance of Students' Occupational Self- Efficacy by Socio-economic Status	244
61	The Relationship between Students' Home Location, study Year and Their Occupational Self-efficacy	245
62	Means and Standard Deviations of Students' Occupational Self- Efficacy by Occupational Preferences Socio-economic Status	246
63	The Analysis of variance of Students' Occupational Self- Efficacy by Occupational Preferences	246
64	The MANOVA of Students Personality Traits by faculty	248
65	The Multiple ANOVA Follow-up test of Personality Traits by faculty	249
66	The MANOVA of Students Personality Traits by major Field of Study	250
67	The Multiple ANOVA Follow-up test of Personality Traits by Major Field of Study	251
68	The Correlation Matrices of the Relationship between Gender and Personality Traits	252
69	The MANOVA of Students Personality Traits by Ethnicity	253
70	The Multiple ANOVA Follow-up test of Personality Traits by Socio-economic Status	254
71	The MANOVA of Students Personality Traits by Socio-economic Status	255
72	The Multiple ANOVA Follow-up test of Personality Traits by Socio-economic Status	255
73	The Correlation Matrices of the Relationship between Home Location and Personality Traits	256
74	The MANOVA of Students Personality Traits by Occupational Preferences	257
75	The Multiple ANOVA Follow-up test of Personality Traits by Occupational Preferences	258
76	The MANOVA of Students' Career Interests by Faculty	261
77	The Multiple ANOVA Follow-up test of Students' Career Interests by Faculty	261
78	The Bonferroni Multiple Comparison of students' career Interests by Faculty	262
79	The MANOVA of Students' Career Interests by major field of study	264
80	The Multiple ANOVA Follow-up test of Students' Career Interests by Major Field of study	264
81	The Correlation Matrices of the Relationship between Age and Career Interests	267
82	The Correlation Matrices of the Relationship between Gender and Career Interests	269
83	The MANOVA of Students' Career Interests by Ethnicity	270
84	The MANOVA of Students' Career Interests by Socio-economic Status	271
85	The relationship between Home Location and Career Interests	272
86	The MANOVA of Students' Career Interests by Occupational	



	Preference	275
87	The Multiple ANOVA Follow-up test of Students' Career Interests by Occupational Preference	275
88	The Bonferroni Multiple Comparison of students' career Interests by Occupational Preferences	275
89	Multiple Regression Correlation Matrices of Realistic Career Interests of Significant variables	280
90	Multiple Regression Correlation Matrices of Investigative Career Interests of Significant variables	284
91	Multiple Regression Correlation Matrices of Artistic Career Interests of Significant variables	286
92	Multiple Regression Correlation Matrices of Social Career Interests of Significant variables	290
93	Multiple Regression Correlation Matrices of Enterprising Career Interests of Significant variables	294
94	Multiple Regression Correlation Matrices of Conventional Career Interests of Significant variables	298
95	The Analysis of variance and $R^2$ of Demographic variables, Personality Traits, and Occupational Self-Efficacy in the Regression of Realistic Career Interests	300
96	The Contribution of the Partial Regression Coefficient and the Beta Weights in the Regression Equation	301
97	The Analysis of variance and $R^2$ of Demographic variables, Personality Traits, and Occupational Self-Efficacy in the Regression of Investigative Career Interests	303
98	The Contribution of the Partial Regression Coefficient and the Beta Weights in the Regression Equation	303
99	The Analysis of variance and $R^2$ of Demographic variables, Personality Traits, and Occupational Self-Efficacy in the Regression of Artistic Career Interests	305
100	The Contribution of the Partial Regression Coefficient and the Beta Weights in the Regression Equation	305
101	The Analysis of variance and $R^2$ of Demographic variables, Personality Traits, and Occupational Self-Efficacy in the Regression of Social Career Interests	307
102	The Contribution of the Partial Regression Coefficient and the Beta Weights in the Regression Equation	308
103	The Analysis of variance and $R^2$ of Demographic variables, Personality Traits, and Occupational Self-Efficacy in the Regression of Enterprising Career Interests	309
104	The Contribution of the Partial Regression Coefficient and the Beta Weights in the Regression Equation	310
105	The Analysis of variance and $R^2$ of Demographic variables, Personality Traits, and Occupational Self-Efficacy in the Regression of Conventional Career Interests	312
106	The Contribution of the Partial Regression Coefficient and the Beta	



	Weights in the Regression Equation	312
107	The Zero Order Correlation Matrices of Significant Demographic Variables, Career Interests, Personality Traits, and Occupational Self-efficacy	314
108	The Collinearity Tests Among Independent Variables	435



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	The Conceptual Framework of the Relationship between Personality Traits, Self-Efficacy and Career Interests among University Students	13
2	The Hexagonal Model for Defining the Physiological Resemblance among Types and Environment and Their Interactions	32
3	New Conceptual Framework	365
4	Normal Q-Q Plot for realistic Scale	419
5	Realistic Variable Box-Plot	419
6	Normal Q-Q Plot for Investigative Scale	420
7	Investigative Variable Box-Plot	420
8	Normal Q-Q Plot for Artistic Scale	421
9	Artistic Variable Box-Plot	421
10	Normal Q-Q Plot for Social Scale	422
11	Stem & Leaf Plot for Social Scale	422
12	Social Variable Box-Plot	423
13	Normal Q-Q Plot for Enterprising Scale	423
14	Enterprising Variable Box-Plot	424
15	Normal Q-Q Plot for Conventional Scale	424
16	Conventional Variable Box Plot	425
17	Stem & Leaf Plot for Logvar10 Variable	426
18	Logvar10 Box- Plot	426
19	Realistic Scale Distribution	427
20	Investigative Scale Distribution	428
21	Artistic Scale Distribution	428
22	Social Scale Distribution	429
23	Enterprising Scale Distribution	429
24	Conventional Scale Distribution	430
25	The Scatter-Plot of Realistic Career Interests	430
26	The Scatter- Plot of Investigative Career Interests	431
27	The Scatter -Plot of Artistic Career Interests	431
28	The Scatter -Plot of Social Career Interests	432
29	The Scatter -Plot of Enterprising Career Interests	432
30	The Scatter -Plot of Conventional Career Interests	433



## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

A = Artistic career interest  
Ac = Achievement  
Af = Affiliation  
Ag = Aggression  
C = Conventional career interest  
CAS = Career Attitude Scale  
Ch = Change  
CI = Career interests  
Cs = Cognitive Structure  
Do = Dominance  
DV = Demographic Variables  
E = Enterprising career interest  
EDA = Exploratory Data Analysis.  
En = Endurance  
I = Investigative career interest  
IIUM = International Islamic University Malaysia.  
Nu = Nurturance  
Or = Order  
OSE = Occupational Self-Efficacy  
OSES = Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale  
PRF = Personality Research Form  
PSD = Public Services Department  
PT = Personality Trait  
R = Realistic career interest  
S = Social career interest  
Sr = Social Recognition  
Un = Understanding  
UPM = Universiti Putra Malaysia  
UTM = Universiti Teknologi Malaysia  
VPI = Vocational Preference Inventory



## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background of the Study**

Among the likely problems to confront students at the end of their schooling is their choice of work by which earning for living can be secured. Most times, people select jobs on the basis of their experiences at home, school or society. For some, it may be a continuing and comfortable experience. To most people, however, it is a completely new experience mixed with many conflicts that confront individuals who are about to start new jobs. As a result, a number of questions will come to mind that arise from several aspects of human life, needs, aspiration, ability and self- concept (Super, 1957).

Despite all these inconveniences, in order to survive in this world we must have jobs through which we would be able to get our basic needs such as food, shelter, clothes as well as other physical and psychological needs that we perceive as very important in our daily life. Maslow (1971) contended that our needs are divided into physical, biological, and psychological needs. Many of these needs can be fulfilled through our jobs. Although we have to work to earn a living, we cannot be happy and satisfied with our jobs if they do not serve our interests (Holland, 1985). Hence, interest is a very important element in selecting a career because without it job satisfaction cannot be attained. Based on this view, a large number of researches have been conducted that indicated strong association between career interest and job satisfaction (Holland, 1985; Gottfredson, 1996).